

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 LONDON 08615 261507Z

53

ACTION COA-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 INT-08 SCI-06 EB-11 COME-00

RSR-01 RSC-01 /055 W

----- 062498

R 261453Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2902

UNCLAS LONDON 08615

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SGEN, TBIO, XM, XG, XE, XD, XA

SUBJECT: MARINE MAMMAL PROTECTION ACT OF 1972:

INFORMATION ON STATUS OF MARINE MAMMALS

REF: STATE 114904

1. SEA LIONS, ELEPHANT SEALS, SEA OTTERS, WALRUS, POLAR BEARS AND SIRENIANS ARE NOT INDIGENOUS TO UNITED KINGDOM OR ADJACENT WATERS. SMALL CETACEANS ARE FOUND IN ADJACENT WATERS, BUT NO ESTIMATES AVAILABLE ON POPULATIONS. NO CETACEANS ARE HUNTED. OF THE PHOCIDAE ONLY TWO SPECIES ARE FOUND IN UK: COMMON SEAL (PHOCA VITULINA) AND GREY SEAL (HALICHOERUS GRYPUS).

2. MOST GREY SEALS ARE FOUND OFF NORTH AND NORTHWEST SCOTLAND AND POPULATION IN THAT AREA IS ESTIMATED AT ABOUT 31,000. ABOUT 9,000 MORE ARE FOUND ON COASTS OF ENGLAND AND WALES (7,000 OF WHICH ARE ON FARNE ISLAND). THUS, TOTAL POPULATION IS ABOUT 40,000 AND IS TENDING TO INCREASE. ON FARNE ISLAND ABOUT 600 FEMALES AND PUPS AND 170 ADULT MALES WERE SHOT THIS YEAR IN CULLING OPERATION TO REDUCE EXCESS NUMBERS, BUT THIS WILL BE REPEATED ONLY AS NECESSARY FOR MANAGEMENT PURPOSES. IN OTHER PARTS OF ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND 700 PUPS WERE SHOT LAST YEAR UNDER GOVERNMENT LICENSE FOR FUR (BUT OSTENSIBLY FOR FISHERIES CONTROL). IN ADDITION TO THIS, AN ESTIMATED 100 ADULTS AND PUPS WERE SHOT BY FISHERMEN IN VICINITY OF NETS.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 LONDON 08615 261507Z

WE HAVE NO REPORT OF ANY BEING TAKEN FOR ZOOS, ETC.

3. NUMBERS OF COMMON SEALS ARE VERY UNCERTAIN. IT IS ESTIMATED THAT THERE ARE ABOUT 4,000 IN BOTH SHETLAND ISLANDS AND ORKNEY, 4,000 IN HEBRIDES AND ABOUT 5,000 IN THE WASH. THUS, TOTAL ESTIMATED TO BE IN NEIGHBORHOOD OF 13,000. NUMBERS ARE PROBABLY INCREASING OVER MOST OF RANGE AND THIS PROBABLY DUE TO REDUCED HUNTING BY FISHERMEN. COMMON SEALS ARE COMPLETELY PROTECTED IN SHETLAND ISLANDS, BUT FOLLOWING NUMBERS WERE SHOT UNDER LICENSE FOR FUR LAST YEAR: 250 ON WEST COAST OF SCOTLAND, 200 ON ORKNEY AND 400 IN THE WASH. NONE TAKEN FOR OTHER PURPOSES. FOREGOING INFORMATION ON GREY AND COMMON SEALS PROVIDED BY MR. W. NIGEL BONNER, NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH COUNCIL, SEALS RESEARCH UNIT.

4. WE ALSO CONTACTED DR. R.M. LAWS OF BRITISH ANTARCTIC SURVEY (SCAR SEALS GROUP) REGARDING POPULATIONS OF PINNIPEDIA ON FALKLAND ISLANDS AND SOUTH GEORGIA ISLANDS. SUMMARY OF DATA IS AS FOLLOWS:

A. FALKLAND ISLANDS: BASED ON AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY, POPULATION OF SOUTHERN SEA LION (OTARIA BYRONIA) ESTIMATED AT 30,000. THIS REPRESENTS A DRAMATIC DECREASE OF ABOUT 90 PERCENT FROM LAST ESTIMATE WHICH WAS MADE IN 1930'S. REASONS FOR DECLINE ARE UNKNOWN (HUNTING OF ALL SPECIES IS FORBIDDEN IN BOTH FALKLAND ISLANDS AND SOUTH GEORGIA ISLANDS), BUT THERE ARE PLANS FOR FURTHER SURVEYS TO DEVELOP MORE INFORMATION. SOUTHERN FUR SEAL (ARCTOCEPHALUS AUSTRALIS AUSTRALIS) POPULATION HAS REMAINED STABLE AT ABOUT 20,000 FOR AT LEAST 20 YEARS. ALTHOUGH SPECIES IS PROTECTED, THERE MAY BE SOME POACHING. THERE ARE NO RELIABLE ESTIMATES OF POPULATIONS OF ELEPHANT SEALS (MIROUNGA LEONINA), BUT THEY PROBABLY NUMBER A FEW THOUSAND. A FEW HAVE BEEN TAKEN UNDER LICENSE FOR ZOOS. ONLY OTHER SPECIES OF PINNIPEDIA FOUND ON FALKLAND ISLANDS IS THE LEOPARD SEAL (HYDRURGA LEPTONYX), BUT THEY ARE SCARCE AND THERE ARE NO ESTIMATES OF NUMBERS.

B. SOUTH GEORGIA ISLANDS: FUR SEAL (A. AUSTRALIS)
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 LONDON 08615 261507Z

GRACILIS) POPULATION HAS RISEN FROM LESS THAN 100 IN 1930'S TO AN ESTIMATED 150,000 TO 200,000 AT PRESENT, PRODUCING 55,000 TO 60,000 PUPS ANNUALLY. POPULATION IS INCREASING AND RESEARCH PROGRAM IS UNDERWAY. ELEPHANT SEAL POPULATION WAS ABOUT 300,000 IN 1950'S AND HAS PROBABLY INCREASED. THERE IS A RELIC POPULATION OF WEDDELL SEALS (LEPTONYCHOTES WEDDELLI) PRODUCING SOME 30 PUPS PER YEAR. AS ON FALKLAND ISLANDS, THERE ARE A

FEW LEOPARD SEALS.

ANNENBERG

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 JUL 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973LONDON08615
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t1973079/aaaaagbm.tel
Line Count: 118
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION COA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 STATE 114904
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: cunninfx
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 SEP 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10-Sep-2001 by chappeld>; APPROVED <12-Oct-2001 by cunninfx>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MARINE MAMMAL PROTECTION ACT OF 1972: INFORMATION ON STATUS OF MARINE MAMMALS
TAGS: SGEN, TBIO, XM, XG, XE, XD, XA
To: SECSTATE WASHDC
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005